

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A method for ameliorating, or treating endotoxin-mediated TNF- α production in acute or chronic heart failure in a human patient, the method comprising the steps of measuring the level of TNF- α , endotoxin or soluble CD 14 in the blood of a human patient and if any such level is elevated, administering to the patient a therapeutically effective amount of a ursodeoxycholic acid, or ursodeoxycholic acid in combination with diuretics.

2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the heart failure is an acute or chronic congestive heart failure with evidence of peripheral edema; the heart failure is severe according to NYHA class III or IV; the heart failure involves a history of decompensation phases; or the heart failure is accompanied by cardiac cachexia~~due to cardiomyopathy of unknown reason, coronary artery disease, valvular disease, hypertrophic obstructive cardiomyopathy, viral myocarditis or genetic cardiomyopathy or dilated cardiomyopathy.~~

3-16. (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the ursodeoxycholic acid is able to inhibit the TNF- α and IL-6 production~~immune activation in~~ the patients in response to endotoxin.

18. (Cancelled)

19-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein the ursodeoxycholic acid is able to reduce the permeability of the gut wall to bacteria and/or endotoxin.

22-24. (Cancelled)

25. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein the ursodeoxycholic acid is administered orally.

26. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein the ursodeoxycholic acid is administered intravenously.

27. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the ursodeoxycholic acid is administered rectally.

28-77. (Cancelled)

78. (Previously presented) A pharmaceutical formulation comprising ursodeoxycholic acid and a diuretic.

79-81 (Cancelled)

82-87 (Cancelled)

88. (New) A method for ameliorating or treating endotoxin mediated TNF- α production in acute and chronic heart failure comprising the step of increasing the concentration of ursodeoxycholic acid in the blood of a patient.